



Newsletter of **THE PALMERSTON NORTH MODEL ENGINEERING CLUB INC**

Managers of the "MARRINER RESERVE RAILWAY"

Please address all correspondence to :- 22b Haydon St, Palmerston North 4414

PRESIDENT

Robert Edwards
(06) 280-3057
pnmec-president@trains.net.nz

SECRETARY

Fin Mason
(06) 356-7849
pnmec-secretary@trains.net.nz

TREASURER

John Tweedie
(06) 358-0150
pnmec-treasurer@trains.net.nz

EDITOR

Doug Chambers
(06) 354-9379
pnmec-editor@trains.net.nz

September
2016
No 426

T H E G E N E R A T O R

PNMEC Home Page www.pnmec.org.nz
Email:- pnmec@trains.net.nz

TRACK RUNNING

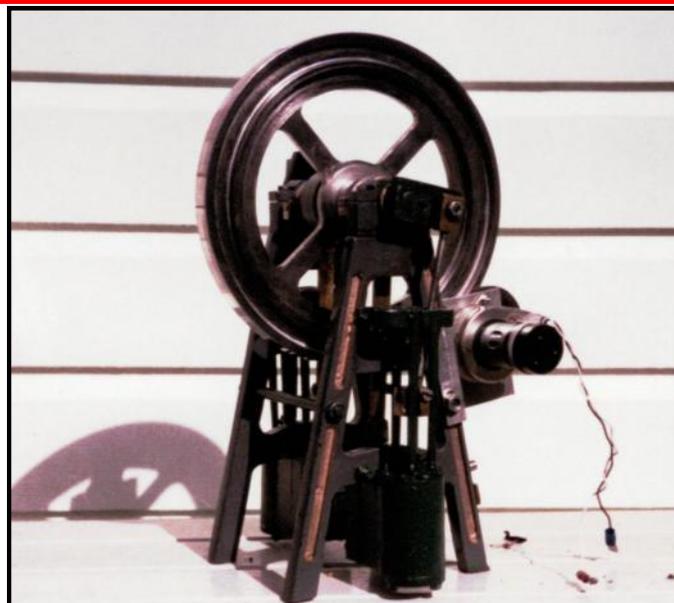
This is held on the FIRST and THIRD Sunday of each month, from 1 pm to 4 pm Summer and 1 pm to 3 pm during the Winter. All club members are welcome to attend and help out with loco coaling, watering and passenger marshalling - none of the tasks being at all difficult. We may even offer you a cuppa.

Visiting club members are always welcome at the track, at the monthly meeting, or if just visiting and wishing to make contact with members, please phone one of the above office bearers.

Sender:- PNMEC
22b Haydon St,
Palmerston North 4414

Place
stamp
here

This Months Featured Model



Report on the August Meeting.

OHAKEA AIR FORCE BASE

This month the Club travelled to Ohakea Air Force Base. Not to view the new helicopters or the trainer aircraft, but to get right up close to the Catalina owned and operated by the NZ Catalina Preservation Society. The aircraft is normally based at Bell Block, New Plymouth, where it has been undergoing an extensive refurbishment over the past four years. Whilst the Trust ideally would like to build covered and secure storage for the aircraft at Bell Block, realistically this will not be likely in the foreseeable future. Trust member and RNZAF flight instructor Jim Rankin has been able to secure for the time being, the hanger on the base presently vacant since the decommissioning of the Iroquois helicopter fleet, for storage of the Catalina.

Obtained on the Lend/Lease Agreement, the RNZAF equipped 5 and 6 Squadrons with a total of 56 PBY-5A Catalina's and operated them throughout the Pacific during the war years in the role of search and rescue, submarine patrol, and supply delivery. The Preservation Society sought to commemorate this service with the acquisition of an airworthy Catalina.

No original RNZAF aircraft remained in a restorable condition, and this aircraft was purchased from a company that had been using it to provide the ultimate safari experience, flying up to 16 (well heeled) tourists from Egypt to Zimbabwe. Previously it had been employed to transport people and materials throughout Canada, having been struck off charge by the Canadian Air Force in 1947. Unlike the RNZAF aircraft which were flying boats requiring external beaching gear to be brought ashore, this Catalina is an amphibian equipped with retractable undercarriage.

This Catalina has been finished to represent NZ 4017, XX-T of 6 Squadron, the nose appropriately painted and named "Wandering Witch". Seating for up to 16 passengers is provided which incidentally is one of the means of financing its operation. Joining the Preservation Society will entitle you to a flight at

a greatly reduced rate!

Catalina's were designed and built by the United States company, Consolidated. The PBY-5A is powered by two Pratt and Whitney 1830 Twin Wasp radial engines each of 1200 hp. It has a maximum speed of 196 mph, and a cruise speed of 125 mph. With a maximum range of 2500 miles, at cruise speed this would amount to a numbing 20 hour flight!

Our late Club member Jim Garden was a flight engineer with the RNZAF on this type and though not so positioned in this aircraft, the engineer's accommodation in service, was within the fuselage to wing pylon! Another local connection with the Catalina was the late Frank Brittain who for many years operated the aircraft spares business, Airspares from the City airport. Frank was a Catalina pilot.

The visit was enjoyed by a good number of Club members who turned out on a pretty miserable evening, weather wise. Jim Rankin is very familiar with the aircraft, indeed is presently working toward his pilot rating on the type. He gave us a thorough introduction before turning us loose to clamber in and around the aircraft with the warning not to crowd the rear compartment and cause the tail to hit the deck, and don't stand under the engines if you wish to avoid oil drips!

Thanks to all involved in facilitating the visit.

Reporter: Fin Mason

COMING EVENTS

Track running at Marriner Reserve Railway

October 2nd from 1pm to 4pm
October 16th from 1pm to 4pm

Open Weekends

New Plymouth Model Engineers

22-23-24 October

Havelock North Live Steamers

21, 22, 23, 24, October

The closing date for the next issue of The Generator is Friday 14th October

Club End of Year Dinner

PN Cosmopolitan Club

22 Linton Street
Palmerston North

Thursday 24 November 2016

Drinks 6pm Dinner 7pm

The cost is \$25 per person. (Pay as you arrive.)
They also have a licensed bar for you to purchase innervating liquids.

Bring the family and join us for a relaxing lead into the summer.

We look forward to seeing you there.

We need to give the restaurant an idea of numbers. Please let us know if you plan to attend and how many there will be in your party.

Murray 326-9665, engineer@inspire.net.nz
Cynthia, 354-7100, cynthia@trains.net.nz

September Club Night

A visit has been arranged for us to tour the **New Zealand Post** facility
At 39 Malden Street.

This is in the old Steel and Tube building.

Members are to gather outside at
7.15pm on 22nd September.

Proper shoes will be a requirement and a warm jacket is recommended.

LETTER FROM ENGLAND

By Stan Compton

About 1937 my father had a minor accident on his bicycle involving a car driver who was in the wrong so as compensation he produced a five pound note (does anyone remember the large white ones?) This was used as a deposit to purchase a 1935 Family 'Morgan' three wheel car with its V twin JAP engine out in front of the radiator. The licence was about half the cost for a four wheel car but even then it was only used for the six months of summer.

When I returned home with my new demob suit (which I gave away), I bought a 350cc Matchless motorcycle but I really coveted a late model 'Super Sports Morgan' three wheeler. One day my brother found an earlier sports model so I bought it re-registered in 1950. This one was very basic, a two speed model the speeds being arranged through two final drive chains, one either side of the rear wheel. Later when I disposed of it I found that it was built in 1924 and nowadays it would be worth a lot of money. However I got my fifty pounds back and my brother borrowed it so that he could buy all the wire and fittings to wire up ten new houses with an assistant. If you multiply to allow for inflation that represented ten weeks work for me but my brother repaid me although I had to ride down to Swindon where the work had been done to pick up the fifty pounds.

Going back to Morgan Cars who started building a four wheel sports car in the mid-thirties, no one then could have visualised the success the firm have achieved with their modern B.M.W. engine cars. They are still hand built in their works at Malvern, Worcester. Now the three wheelers are back in production, but a vastly different product to the original sports model and they are aimed

Robert Edwards reminded members that they can get their PNME name badges through him. Just contact him and he will arrange manufacture.

John the Treasurer noted that subs are now coming in slowly and that if you haven't paid up yet please do so as soon as possible

Robert Edwards reminded members that the next event the PNME club is involved in is Feilding Rail's Open Weekend 5th & 6th November. The portable track will be in action and once again members will be invited to be involved.

THIS MONTH'S FEATURED MODEL

By Doug Chambers for Ian Stephens

Once again Ian has found a different design of stationary steam engine to make a model of. This time he has chosen a twin cylinder inverted engine. It runs very well on air but Ian has fitted up a small electric motor with a rubber friction wheel that presses on the flywheel rim. This makes the engine turn over very slowly giving the onlooker a chance to see all the 'works' moving.

at a different buyer. Now they have a two litre V twin engine (a Smith) built in the USA, improved gearbox and front suspension, but still hand built for the wealthy buyer who wants to have a bit of fun. The last time I visited their Works on a booked tour I saw one that was to be shipped to Japan.

One of the problems of having mechanical skills leaves me being asked to help people with problems with worn out cars or domestic items like toasters. Of the latter I recall a neighbour who bought one to me saying that it no longer worked properly. It must have been twenty years old and had been a wedding present. I said "Look Ron, it is worn out, time to buy a new one." His reply was "It worked well all those years; surely you can fix it for me?"

Another time a Morris Minor had a burnt out valve, the owner lived twenty miles away close to my sister who had sung my praises to him. Living out in the country the car was the only means of transport and by the time I had got back the following week with a new valve another valve had burnt out. All I could locate locally was a new valve that needed machining to make it fit so it was a case of driving home to use a lathe at work to do the job. The next day I went back to complete the job so he could drive to work. While he was watching me work I could hear a horse-race commentary on the radio and the penny dropped; I was the mug, he had no money to pay me for my work!!! In my motorcycling days I was happy to help someone who had broken-down out on the highway. I recall a young man with an old BSA with a clutch problem. It did not take me long to fix it and the young man, a police cadet, tried to give me a ten shilling note which was all he had on him. I refused it and sent him on his way, what a difference to the other man!!

The elevated track at Hereford has been getting a thorough overhaul by a willing group of workers. A bad spot has been rectified; it has caused a few derailments in the past. New sleepers have been cut and slotted by a new member who deserves our thanks for tackling such a big job. Our rolling stock has been repainted, lined and lettered with HSME nicely blocked on the side panels.

We have a new member on the elevated track with a new 'Sweet Pea' and although he is new to steam locomotives he has the right touch and keeps the engine in steam with no problems.

He clears the ash and fires little and often without instruction. He is building a six inch scale steam tractor. The original engine would have weighed about five tons so the model should not be too heavy to transport. A member of many years, often found on duty in our signal box arrives on his very nice 'Royal Enfield' 750cc vertical twin motor cycle owned since new. Recently he brought his almost completed three inch traction engine for us to see. It has taken many years to complete after many interruptions so credit to him for sticking at it when other problems occurred.

Another new member of retired age and new to our world of steam is always early on site and he helps Paul our station master, on running days. He is good with our young passengers who often need help on loading up. In return he and Paul sometimes get a chance to drive a locomotive. Traction engines are another world and I believe that we have another member who is building a steam tractor, but the question is what to do with it. Some builders make a trailer to give rides to children but I recall a man at the Much Marcle Rally with a three inch scale 'Burrell' who found his front wheels lifting up as he tried to climb the slight grade on the Rally field.

I built a three inch scale baler from Ransomes, Simms and Jefferies drawings obtained from the Museum of English Rural Life. I had a four inch scale 'Allchin' traction engine to drive the three inch baler and I found that it took a lot of power to compress the straw bales tight. Florist's soft wire could be twisted into a loop quite easily as the baler was a wire tying model. The children loved to obtain a small bale to keep and I expect that a three inch scale traction engine could cope with a bale produced by a two inch scale stationary baler. The bale being about the size of a 500gram pack of butter.

We hear a lot about 'Rosebud' grates these days so I made one up with about 140 3mm holes tapering from 5mm in a 10mm thick steel plate to fit Fred's Quarry 'Hunslet'. He has had a problem for sometime clearing ash due to access to the ashpan because a hand-pump had been fitted under the cab floor plate. On the first steaming all looked great to see the fire hovering above the grate as it should do but after hauling passengers for an hour we could see ash was not clearing up the chimney. After another hour and Fred had to dump the ash and clinker, and then relight the fire. This was while burning

Welsh steam coal and I had heard of a driver using a 'Rosebud' grate and Welsh steam coal which burnt away to a residue that looked like cigarette ash. Now we all know that coal quality can vary in the same seam; I once ran my 'Caledonian' 2-4-0 at Tintern on the Welsh Border, only a small locomotive burning anthracite bean-sized coal bought from a mine of known quality. With heavy loads I had a white hot fire with 'Eli Draughting' but I was unable to obtain the same result with Anthracite from a different source. Fred had a further attempt burning Welsh steam coal with Anthracite mixed in equal quantities but the result was the same. I suspect that with a different locomotive on a longer track with the throttle fully open and the valve gear notched well up there would be a better result. I have replaced the 'Rosebud' grate with the original one that was fitted with ¼" stainless steel bars with ¼" air spaces.

Bill Frazer NZR Driver, Mountaineer and Photographer.

By Doug Chambers

The following two stories are from Bill's retirement years. When the restored 'Kingston Flyer' was operating between Lumsden and Kingston Bill's son arranged a trip on the train for his father. On the day Bill was taken to Lumsden and as there was some time to fill in Bill was invited up onto the footplate where he was introduced to Russell Glendening and the fireman. Russell vacated the driver's seat so that Bill could sit and yarn. After a while Russell said that it was nearly time for the train to depart and Bill stood up ready to go and ride in the carriage. Russell told Bill to sit down again as you are the driver for this trip. Now here was a challenge for Bill; he had fired a Rogers 'K' on this line many years ago and it was some time since he had driven an Ab class locomotive. Bill checked his old railway pocket watch and asked the time they were due in at Kingston and if there were any speed restrictions on the line. Then with a toot on the whistle the train was underway and Lumsden was reached almost to the minute of the timetable. Russell then took over and Bill was able to go over to a cafeteria for a cup of tea and a scone. A lot of the passengers, mostly tourists also went to the cafeteria where Bill was quickly identified and he was asked for autographs. Presently a queue formed and Bill, at a loss to understand how they knew he was the driver inquired of a tourist the explanation.

The tourist said that during the trip the guard had made his way through the carriages saying that they were unlikely to have any problems as the hand on the throttle was that of a very experienced driver who was retired but very capable still. Bill's tea was cold by the time he had finished writing autographs and I remember him saying to me "Doug, there is a price for fame!!!"

This event took place thirty years after retiring from the New Zealand Railways and Bill noted that he didn't imagine that there would be any other drivers that had driven an Ab thirty years on after their retirement.

The second story has nothing to do with the railways. Bill's son arranged a flight for Bill in a Ski-Plane, probably a Cessna 180 up into the Southern Alps. The pilot was a friend of Bill's son and as there were two American tourists and Bill with the pilot all four seats were occupied. The plane took-off and climbed up into the mountains and after a while it landed on the snow on a very gentle slope well up towards the peaks. The pilot invited them all to get out of the plane and admire the view. Bill looked about him and after recognising some landmarks he asked the pilot how long they had got before they had to leave. The pilot assured them that the weather was not going to change and they could have an hour or more up there if they so desired. Bill said "Right let's go for a short walk", and he and the pilot with the two Americans trailing along went around a bluff to an area where there was little snow and numerous flat rocks. Bill indicated one of the rocks and told the others to turn it over. When the rock was turned over and rolled away a container was exposed. At Bill's request the pilot cut the seals and removed a piece of paper and read the writing on it out loud. The paper had been written by a survey party who had all signed their names before the container was sealed and covered by the boulder. Of great surprise to the pilot and the Americans was the fact that Bill Frazer's name was on the list as the mountain guide who was leading the party of surveyors in the early 1920s. Bill told me that it had been a lot longer trek in the 1920s than the short flight in the ski-plane. In later years Bill attended the re-commissioning of the Rogers 'K' No 88 after it had been hauled out of the Orieti River and painstakingly restored by a group of enthusiasts at Tinwald.

In the Newsletters from other Clubs

Blastpipe Petone

Are advertising a 3½” gauge ‘Britannia’ for sale. This is the one built by Phil Davis and later sold to Alan Baldock. Enquiries to Brian Moosman, Masterton, Phone 06 370 3514. Brian is trying to sell the engine on behalf of the estate of Alan Baldock.

Maidstone EBoP Model Engineers

Weather has been unfavourable for track running.

Invercargill Model Engineers

Pond cleaning operation has gone well. Preparations for the Great Little Train Show are well in hand.

Havelock North Live Steamers

John Romanes farewell. The beams on the trestle bridge are to be replaced.



Some photos of the Catalina PBY-5A
Photos Bruce Geange

If you would like an email when this newsletter is published, send us an email with "Generator Please" in the subject line with your Name, Club and Email address to pnmec@trains.org.nz